

# Thank You For Letting Me Serve



**Florida House of Representatives**  
**Representative Rick Kriseman • House District 53**

Friends,

Representing your interests in the Florida House of Representatives continues to be a welcomed challenge and a rewarding privilege.

As you know, much of the country is recovering from a severe recession, and Florida is no different. We continue to face many economic hurdles. Prior to the 2010 Session, the Florida Legislature's intent was to create jobs and further develop our economy. Unfortunately, I did not always agree with the approach or solutions offered, and therefore voted against the state budget and many other proposals. The budget failed, in my opinion, to meet the needs of Floridians. It was my view that the budget failed to hold education harmless. While it increases the annual per-student funding by \$1.22, that number is misleading, as school officials say their expenses, including insurance, retirement and utilities will outstrip that increase. In terms of overall school funding, this budget presents the second-worst per student funding level since 2006. What's more, the budget includes new university tuition hikes of up to 15 percent, just as it cuts scholarship awards under the Bright Futures program.

I was also saddened that the budget is projected to lead to the loss of potentially thousands of jobs throughout Florida due to the decision to shift \$160 million from the state's transportation trust fund to other spending. I opposed that decision.

Also of serious concern to me is that funding for nursing homes and hospitals are cut, including a 7-percent reduction in state payments for the care of indigent patients. Finally, for the third session in a row, my bill to increase the state's portion of Medicaid's Personal Needs Allowance for Floridians in nursing homes never received a hearing.

Granted, it was a huge challenge this year to write a budget. The Legislature began session with a \$3 billion shortfall. Thankfully, our state was able to rely upon another \$2.3 billion in federal stimulus money approved last year by President Obama and Congress, along with another \$270 million in assistance that Congress is expected to approve. A new gaming compact with the Seminole Indian tribe also helps balance the budget with a projected \$433 million in revenues for the state.

While attention was given to restoring our fiscal stability, much time was also spent debating and voting on bills and amendments that were either harmful to Floridians, or simply unnecessary. Legislation such as SB 6 based teacher pay on a student's learning gains and took needed protections away from our educators. I voted against this bill and was pleased that Governor Charlie Crist vetoed it.

Finally, since there are so many issues of importance, and so little space here, I strongly encourage you to contact our office anytime.

District 53 and its residents are very special to me and it's an honor to fight for you in Tallahassee. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you.

Respectfully,

**Rep. Rick Kriseman**

#### COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

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## Kriseman on Oil Drilling, Renewable Energy

Protecting the livelihood of Floridians, and our beautiful yet delicate environment, should be a top priority for every public servant. That is why I've been so opposed to oil drilling in Florida's territorial waters, less than 12 miles off our coast. As we've now learned, the risks of drilling far outweigh the rewards. It is also clear that despite their prior testimony to the Florida House, the big oil companies are simply not prepared to respond to a crisis.

### ★ Banning Near-Shore Oil Drilling

In May, I drafted legislation to constitutionally ban near-shore drilling, and urged the Governor to bring the Legislature back to Tallahassee so that we can place such language on November's ballot.

While the nightmare in the Gulf of Mexico has served to shine a light on a host of problems facing both the oil industry and governmental agencies, it was not the impetus for my involvement.

### ★ Protecting Florida and its Consumers

Since early 2009, I have worked to stop legislative plans for near-shore drilling, and throughout my entire time as a public servant I have supported policies promoting the development of renewable energy resources.

This past session I filed legislation ratifying the rules on renewable portfolio standards adopted by the Public Service Commission. These rules include aggressive standards of 20 percent renewable energy production by 2020 and protecting utility customers from excessive rate increases.

### ★ Powering Florida's Future

It's important that Florida, and the rest of America, ends its reliance on foreign oil. Doing so will have positive national security implications. However, we will not accomplish this goal by embracing fossil fuels and utilizing such 19th-century technology in our own backyard.

Florida is the largest and most populated state in the country without a renewable portfolio standard. If we're serious about getting people back to work, building a new economic engine, and doing something positive for future generations of Floridians, this must change.





## My District 53

1700 66th Street North  
Suite 203  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710

### Rep. Rick Kriseman

[rick.kriseman@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:rick.kriseman@myfloridahouse.gov)

### Kevin King

Legislative Assistant  
[kevin.king@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:kevin.king@myfloridahouse.gov)

### David Flintom

District Assistant  
[david.flintom@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:david.flintom@myfloridahouse.gov)

*In an effort to be environmentally conscious and communicate with my constituents through e-newsletters, I encourage you to email David Flintom to join our mailing list. We will keep you informed on legislation in Tallahassee as well as the latest happenings around District 53.*

★ Rick  
Kriseman

★ LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ★

1700 66th Street N  
Suite 203  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710

# Representing Your **Interests**



★ Rick  
Kriseman